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When you are buying a vehicle that life depends on at times, buy a good one. If you don't know what maker to choose from, buy from a reliable dealer whose word is his reputation. I have a splendid assortment of light-speeding

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And are made by the best manufacturers, at prices that will surprise you.

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I HAVE A FEW PIANOS.

Of the very highest grade and latest styles,
TO GO AT COST FOR A FEW DAYS.

This is an opportunity of a life-time.
I also have the latest improved ball-bearing NEW HOME SEWING MACHINES for \$30. Vibrator Standard Machine only \$28.00.
ORGANS CHEAP.

M. L. WILLIS,
South Main Street, Anderson, S. C.

Court Proceedings.

After we closed our report of the Court proceedings last Wednesday morning, the following cases were disposed of:

Oscar Childress, charged with assault and battery with intent to kill, plead guilty, and was sentenced to six months on the chain gang or fine of \$100. J. R. McCrider plead guilty to breach of trust and larceny, and was sentenced to nine months on the chain gang.

The case against Luther Strickland, charged with bigamy, was not prossed. In the case of Robert Given, Pink Patson, J. C. Holliday and Hamp Kinard, charged with gambling, the two latter named plead guilty and were sentenced to three months on the chain gang or a fine of \$30 each. Given and Patson's case was transferred to the contingent docket.

The Grand Jury reported a number of true bills and for good and sufficient reasons the cases were continued until the next term of Court in June. The Solicitor announced that he had no other bills of indictment. Judge Benet then delivered the following charge to the Grand Jury, and announced that the Court would hear their presentment as soon as they were ready to make it:

JUDGE BENET'S CHARGE.

Mr. Foreman and Gentlemen of the Grand Jury: You are now at liberty to devote your time and attention to the other business that properly comes before you as Grand Jurors. You will endeavor before filing your presentment at this term to look into the condition of the Jail and the Poor House and as far as you can will examine the public offices and the conduct of public officials. It will be impossible for me to overtake all of that work, satisfactory or not, and it will be advisable to appoint special committees, or a committee, to attend to these matters, but at the summer term you will be able to make a fuller report as to these important matters. But I wish to bring to your attention again the stockade scandal to which I referred in my opening charge on Monday morning. At that time so far as the Court is concerned it was a matter of rumor and report and the Daily Mail editorial without any substantial charges and charges, the names of any parties implicated. Since then the case of the State vs. Newell, charged with murder, has been tried, and during the progress of the trial of that case it was developed from the testimony of witnesses on the stand that the deceased, Will Hull, had been killed while in Newell's stockade. To the astonishment of the Court it was shown that he was not there as a convict, but was there under a so-called contract to labor on the farm. It seems that he was charged by Newell with violation of a labor contract, that Newell swore out a warrant for his arrest before Magistrate J. J. Gilmer; that the magistrate issued the warrant, placed it in the hands of Newell as a deputy, and that Newell thus deputized and accompanied by a sheriff's constable, Dillingham, went to the home of Will Hull and arrested him. It appears that they did not take him to jail, and so far as the testimony shows that was the end of the process of the law. Instead of being taken to jail, as he ought to have been, under the warrant of arrest, by some strange procedure he was taken to Newell's stockade, where it seems that Newell had some 15 convicts at work on his farm. So, gentlemen, here was a poor negro taken from his wife and children under a pretext of arrest. The machinery of the law was used to seize him, take him from his home and put him in a convict's stockade and work him like a convict without process of law. He was under no sentence of the Court, he had not been tried, and the machinery showed that he was guarded like a convict, made to labor like a convict and treated in all respects like a convict. And indeed the manner of his death would seem to indicate that it was in an effort to leave this convict camp that he was shot as he endeavored to escape the sentence of the law. Gentlemen, this is a serious matter, and I charge you that it is your duty to make a thorough investigation of this case. You will bring before your Court the facts that issued the warrant and the constable that executed it. You have the power to send for persons and papers and you will only be doing your duty in making a thorough investigation and reporting upon this treatment of Will Hull.

I hold in my hand a printed form of contract entered: "State of South Carolina, County of Anderson, contract and agreement for labor on farm." Let me read it to you. "This contract and agreement for labor on farm, made and entered into this day between _____, landlord, party of the first part, and _____, laborer, party of the second part, witnesseth: "That I, _____, laborer, of the second part, do hereby bind over and hire myself to do and perform general farm work under the supervision of said _____, his agents, for the period of _____ months, commencing _____ and ending _____, and as pay for the said services I am to receive the sum of \$_____ per month, together with my board and lodging, which wages, less any advances made to me from time to time, and lost time, at the expiration of above time, I agree at all times to be subject to the orders and commands of said _____ or his agents, perform all work required of me, or of his agents, and have the right to use such force as he or his agents may deem necessary to require me to remain on his farm and perform good and satisfactory services. He shall have the right to lock me up for safe keeping, keep me under the rules and regulations of his farm, and if I should leave his farm or run away he shall have the right to offer and pay a reward of not exceeding \$25 for my capture and return, together with the expenses of same, which amount so advanced, together with any other indebtedness I may owe _____, at the expiration of above time, I agree to work out under all rules and regulations of this contract at same wages as above, commencing _____ and ending _____." "The said _____ shall have the right to transfer his interest in this contract to any other party, and I agree to continue work for said assignee same as for the original party of the first part. "I, _____, landlord, party of the first part, hereby agree with and hire the

said _____ for the above time, and pay wages as above set forth and otherwise fulfill my part of above agreement. "Witness our hands and seals this, the _____ day _____, 189____.

"Witness:" _____ (Seal.)

Mr. Foreman and Gentlemen of the Grand Jury: This so-called printed contract, printed here in Anderson, is another fact for you to consider in this important investigation. It would be interesting to know whose legal acumen it was that was able to frame such a paper for such a purpose. Was he a member of the bar? It would be interesting to know his name. Listen, gentlemen, to some of the terms of the contract: "I agree at all times to be subject to the orders and commands of said landlord or his agents, he shall have a right to use such force as he or his agents may deem necessary to require me to remain on his farm and perform good and satisfactory services."

Here, gentlemen, is an attempt under a pretense of legal authority to give the landlord and his agents the power to punish the poor laborer who is induced or forced to sign such a contract. And it is currently reported that the lash is freely applied under this provision of the contract.

Listen again—"He shall have the right to lock me up for safe keeping." Here the poor laborer gives the landlord the power to imprison him.

Again—"he shall have the right to work me under the rules and regulations of his farm." What is this, gentlemen, but a cunning device whereby the poor laborer subjects himself to the treatment of a State convict camp?

Again—"And if I should leave his farm or run away he shall have the right to offer and pay a reward of not exceeding \$25 for my capture and return, together with the expenses of same, which amount so advanced, together with any indebtedness I may owe _____ at the expiration of above time, I agree to work out under all the rules and regulations of this contract at same wages as above." Mr. Foreman and Gentlemen, if this were a statute providing for the capture and return of runaway slaves or escaped felons it would not be difficult to understand, but this is one of the terms and conditions in a so-called contract and agreement to labor on a farm in Anderson County. By such terms and conditions it is made plain that poor ignorant negroes are subjected to a state that is worse than slavery. I doubt if there ever was such a contract framed or devised or contracted before in any civilized or Christian community. It is a contract, it is a contract, it has no binding force. No Court would attempt to enforce it. It is contra bonos mores, against the public good, and utterly null and void. No free man in this commonwealth nor any other country can be permitted, even if he desired to do so, to enter away his liberty and make himself a mere chattel; and that is what this stipulation in it reads: "The said landlord shall have the right to transfer his interest in this contract to any other party, and I agree to continue work for said assignee same as for the original party of the first part."

So you see, gentlemen, this stipulation attempts to provide for the sale and transfer of the poor laborer. The practical result of this so-called contract when carried into effect is to reduce the laborer to a position worse than slavery and to subject him to treatment worthy only of Siberian prisons. It is currently reported that not only are men confined in stockades in this county under such contracts, but that even women and little babies are also imprisoned there. I call it imprisonment, gentlemen, and without doubt it is false imprisonment, and whoever as landlord holds in confinement under such a contract as this is guilty of the offense of false imprisonment and should be summarily and severely punished. It would be interesting to know if any such contracts are on record in the clerk's office. You should ascertain from the clerk if any such papers are on record in this County. You will procure from him a list of the names of the so-called landlords and laborers, parties to such contracts, and report them in your presentment.

Mr. Foreman and Gentlemen: As white men living in a State where so large a portion of our population is composed of negroes, it is our duty as representing the law-abiding element of our population to see that justice is done to that inferior race. There is no doubt that the negro race is inferior to ours in intelligence, in civilization, in moral character. There is no doubt we have deprived them of the practical of political power, and it is best for them that it is so, but we are all the more bound to treat them kindly, fairly and justly. They are, in fact, our wards, and we as their guardians, trustees, to be sure, but they are not made the victims of deceit and fraud, imposition and oppression. The fact that the negro is ignorant, poor and dependent on the white man is no reason why he should be made the helpless victim of the white man's greed, deceit and tyranny. We must not allow the negro's necessity to be the hard-hearted white man's opportunity. The white man's burden is a heavy one, and the white man of the Southern States has a larger portion of it to bear than any other white man anywhere. Let us endeavor to show ourselves worthy of our responsibility, and as Grand Jurors and officers of the Court we must see to it that in Anderson County, this prosperous, enterprising, Christian community, the negro shall have justice done him. You were before upon me tonight to make a thorough investigation of the stockade scandal. The oath which you took as Grand Jurors requires you to present all things truly as they come to your knowledge, to the best of your ability, and so help you God. You have sworn not only that you will not present anyone for envy, hatred or malice, but that you will leave no one unprotected for fear, favor, affection, reward or hope of reward, and I know that in this regard you will do your duty. You will bring before your Court to the light of day. Such disgraceful conduct cannot stand day-light, but like those fungus growths that flourish only in dark corners it will perish when exposed to the light of day. The editor of the Daily Intelligencer deserves the thanks of all good people for the editorial article which drew public attention to this matter. The air is filled with reports and rumors of the most startling character. One hears that there is a stockade in your County without a single convict in it, yet filled with men held there under these so-called contracts for labor, men who are guarded like convicts, punished like convicts and sometimes

shot as if they were felons escaping from prison and the custody of the law. Representing the law-abiding, God-fearing people of Anderson County, you will ascertain the names of those so-called landlords who have brought disgrace to your County and put it to a bad name. You will in person or by committee visit all the stockades in your County and you will report to the Court the names of all who are therein confined, the offenses for which they are in prison, and the names of those who are there confined under contract for any causes. You will do all you can this week, but as it is manifestly impossible to finish the investigation this week I shall order a special session of the Court of General Sessions to be held on Thursday, the 7th day of March, on which day you as Grand Jurors will convene as a Grand Jury and make a final presentment of this matter. You have the power to send for persons and papers and to compel the attendance of witnesses and to examine them, and I trust to you and all law-abiding people in your County to unite in an effort to root out this shameful practice and to remove this black blot from the good name of Anderson County.

On Friday at noon Judge Benet was notified that the Grand Jury was ready to make their presentment and he promptly convened the Court for that purpose. The following presentment was then read:

GRAND JURY'S PRESENTMENT.

To the Honorable W. C. Benet, Presiding Judge:

We have passed upon all the bills left for our consideration by the Solicitor.

Owing to the importance of certain matters brought to our attention by the Solicitor, we have been unable to examine the County Poor House and Jail, and in order to facilitate our investigations we have appointed several committees whose duty it shall be to make investigations and report to us at a later session. We have made special investigation of the labor contract system, which prevails to a large extent in this County and have found on record a number of contracts in which laborers have agreed to work under guard and to be locked up at night receiving the same treatment practically as convicts. Our information is that these contracts are not confined to those places where convicts are worked and where stockades exist, but have, in some instances, been executed to landowners who do not work convicts. To what extent the provisions of these contracts have been enforced we have so far been unable to ascertain. If enforced strictly they have led to a violation of the law which should at once be ended. To the end, therefore, that a full investigation may be made and that the law may be vindicated we have appointed a committee consisting of R. A. Sullivan, J. B. Leverett, J. S. McCall, J. T. Milford and E. B. Hall and ask that your honor give them full power to swear and examine witnesses, to compel the production of such papers as may be necessary, with the privilege of visiting without hindrance the stockades in this county, and of having access to and conferring with all laborers who are or are suspected of being parties to their liberty under these contracts, which committee shall make a full investigation and report the same, together with the evidence taken, at the special session of the Court which is ordered to be held on March 7th.

We further present that we have made a partial examination of the books and accounts of Magistrate J. J. Gilmer, of the City of Anderson, and have found that gross irregularities exist in his office and that certain warrants issued by him have not been entered upon his books or returned to his office and that relatives or agents of the prosecutor have been deputized to serve such warrants and in that various items of cost collected by him in criminal cases have not been turned over to the County or accounted for as provided by law. We have instructed the above mentioned committee to make complete the examination of his books and accounts and of all matters pertaining to his office and to furnish the same to the Court at such time as the Court may order.

Numerous complaints have been made to us of a system of lending money upon chattel mortgages that prevails in this city in which poor and ignorant people have been compelled to pay exorbitant rates of interest, but so far we have found nothing criminal in the transactions, and the only redress of the parties seeming to be an avoidance of the contracts upon the civil side of the court. We have, however, limited the investigation of this matter to the same committee that has been charged with the investigations of the other matters above referred to.

The following committee has been appointed to visit the Poor House and Jail: Edw. W. Whitten, H. H. Gray and J. W. Palmer.

The committee first above named have been charged with the duty of examining the books and offices of the County officers and to make their report to the Court at the next term of the Court. We would recommend that said committee be allowed to employ an expert to aid them in all the investigations that they have been charged with making.

The following committee has been appointed to inspect the County chain gang: J. N. McAllister, T. M. King, James A. Shirley.

While the Grand Jury has no power to enforce the recommendation we beg leave to suggest that it would be to the public interest that all warrants issued by the magistrates in the City of Anderson should be served by the sheriff or one of the deputies.

In regard to the labor contracts in the County we have been informed that the impression has gone abroad that the work of this Grand Jury will extend to the avoidance of labor contracts generally, and we deem it, therefore, proper to say that the purpose of the Grand Jury is only to correct those wrongs that exist and in the discharge of that duty we hope to have the co-operation of all law-abiding citizens of the County, and at the same time we recognize that the labor contract system constitutes a most important factor in our County's development and the influence of the Grand Jury will be firmly set against any avoidance of just and equitable contracts.

In conclusion we beg to extend our thanks to your Honor and to the Solicitor for your courtesies to us and the

aid you have given us in our investigations. Respectfully submitted,
R. A. SULLIVAN,
Foreman.

Feb. 15, 1901.

After the reading of the presentment of the Grand Jury in Court Judge Benet issued the following order: "The State of South Carolina, County of Anderson, in General Sessions, do hereby order that the Grand Jury of Anderson County having reported in its presentment of date Feb. 15, 1901, that gross irregularities exist in the office of Magistrate J. J. Gilmer, and that he has collected fines and costs which he has not paid over to the County Treasurer. Now, it is ordered that the said J. J. Gilmer do show cause before this Court at its special session on March 7, 1901, why he should not be prosecuted for malfeasance in office. That a certified copy of this order be served on J. J. Gilmer by the sheriff, when same is furnished him by the clerk, who shall do so forthwith."

Feb. 15, 1901.

W. C. BENET,
Presiding Judge.

GENERAL NEWS ITEMS.

—A cotton mill is among the possibilities for Central.

—Delaware has declined to abolish the whipping post and pillory.

—The appropriation for the Indians from the Federal Treasury will be near \$10,000,000.

—A national prohibition conference has been called at Buffalo, N. Y., in August next.

—It is said that England's new king has cancer of the throat and can not live many years.

—Mareoni has succeeded in transmitting perfect messages by his wireless telegraph to the distance of 200 miles.

—Smallpox is said to be in nearly every county in Mississippi. This plague is very nearly a national epidemic now.

—Frank Klufsky, aged sixty-eight years, of Cleveland, Ohio, moody over money loss, refused to eat and died from starvation.

—It is said that the sugar trust has perfected plans to control all the sugar plantations of Hawaii by combining them in a trust.

—It is reported that a lot of Pennsylvania women lynched a man the other day for beating his wife. Served the brute right, too.

—By an enabling act of the Legislature the school children of New Hampshire are to decide by their votes in June next what shall be the State flower.

—A bill has been introduced in the Kansas legislature providing for the dispensary system like the one in this State except that it eliminates the profit feature.

—The Arkansas Legislature has decided upon the apple blossom as the State flower. The Arkansas Federation of Women's Clubs wanted the passion flower chosen.

—The legal rate of interest in Canada is now five per cent., the reduction from six per cent. having been made by a statute of the Dominion which went into effect January 1.

—The close of the present session will end the term of Congressman White, the only negro in Congress, and it is generally conceded that it will be a long time before another is elected.

—In the value of the aggregate production of metals during the last year, Montana heads the list with \$59,000,000. Colorado comes second, with \$47,000,000. Arizona was third and California fourth.

—Chief Justice Bleckley, of Georgia, though he is 70 years old, has entered the University of Georgia as a student to learn a little more about mathematics. He is puzzling the professors no little with his problems.

—The United States supreme court has declared the legacy tax, imposed by the war revenue law, to be unconstitutional, and under this decision the sum of \$102,722 collected from the Cornelius Vanderbilt estate, has been refunded.

—In Richmond, Va., the wards are not designated by numbers, as is the case in other American cities, but by names of statesmen: Clay, Monroe, Madison-Jefferson, Marshall and Jackson. Clay ward is the largest in Richmond in voting population.

—Several members of a church in Kutztown, Pa., having fallen far behind with their fair dues, the board of trustees has decided that in future the bell shall not be tolled for a funeral in any family which has not paid up its indebtedness, an year in advance besides.

—Mr. McClellan, of New York, comparing the cost of the soldier in European armies with the cost to the United States says, including the cost of pensions, etc., each United States soldier involved an expense of \$2,828, while a German soldier costs \$237 and a French soldier \$232.

—Practical jokes have a way of imitating the boomerang, as Charles Day, of Marshall, Mich., has discovered to his discomfort and discomfiture. Mr. Day was sitting in a barber shop getting his hair cut, and when the idea struck him that it would be real funny to touch the barber's hand with the lighted end of a cigarette and see him jump. The barber was just rubbing some bay rum on Day's head and the cigarette ignited the alcoholic mixture, which blazed up like a torchlight procession. In four seconds there wasn't a hair left on Day's cranium and he has sworn off on practical jokes.

STATE NEWS.

—Greenville has been granted another beer dispensary.

—Landrum is to have a hoisery mill with a capital stock of \$20,000.

—Columbia is to have a horse show this spring. This will be a fashionable affair.

—Just 26 years ago Sherman's incendiaries made things hot in lower South Carolina.

—The Abbeville Cotton Mills, Abbeville, have declared a semi annual dividend of 3 per cent.

—Greenville County pays out more than any other County in the State for jurors and witnesses.

—It is said that John Gary Evans will be one of the candidates for the toga now worn by McLaurin.

—The Philadelphia Record says that South Carolina is the smartest and the smallest of the Southern States.

—Sam Samuels, colored, was killed at Orangeburg by Policeman Bogard. He attacked the officer with a razor.

—There have been a few cases of a mild form of small pox in Clinton recently, but the disease is not spreading.

—The S. C. Press Association will probably take a trip to the Pan-American Exposition at Buffalo this summer.

—Associate Justice Eugene B. Gary is much improved in health after spending six weeks in a Baltimore hospital.

—A movement is on foot to complete the Catholic cathedral in Charleston. It is an elegant though unfinished building.

—Robbers broke open a safe in Duke's store in Branchville and secured about \$100 in cash and damaged the safe \$150.

—The old Mills house in Charleston has been sold for \$40,000. It will be opened as a modern hotel in time for the exposition.

—The State Volunteer Fireman's Association will hold their annual firemen's tournament in May either in Columbia or Newberry.

—Ten stores and a hotel were burned at Darlington, inflicting a loss of \$25,000 or over, all of which was fairly covered by insurance.

—A county fair is to be held in Abbeville before the Charleston exposition with the idea of sending the best exhibits to Charleston.

—Judging from all interior reports the South Carolina cotton acreage for the present year will be the largest in the history of the State.

—There will probably be a number of South Carolinians who will make applications for positions in the new army provided for by congress.

—A negro paper published in Charleston says there are 10,000 negroes in that city who loaf from choice—they could get work, but do not want it.

—The sentiment in favor of compulsory vaccination is steadily growing. If everybody were vaccinated, smallpox could get no foothold in this State.

—A negro attempted to rob a prominent dressmaker on Main street in Greenville. He grabbed her and almost threw her into a ditch in the effort to seize her pocketbook.

—Editor Bradford of the Fort Mill Times is the defendant in a homicide case. He tried to make some noisy negroes hush as they were disturbing his sick mother. One of the negroes drew his pistol and the editor shot him.

—The woman's department of the South Carolina Interstate and West Indian Exposition has been organized at Charleston with Mrs. Sarah Calhoun Simonds as president, Mrs. G. A. Wagner, vice president, Mrs. W. A. Pringle, treasurer.

—George Thomas, colored, was hanged in Beaufort last Friday for assault committed last April on Mrs. George Duberly, a prominent white woman. It was the first legal hanging that has ever occurred in Beaufort county for rape.

—Henry Babb and his sons killed Lee Babb, a brother of Henry's, in Greenville county. There had been bad blood between them about certain land transactions and when Lee Babb was in the woods cutting wood unarmed he was approached by his brother and the two sons and shot to death. He leaves a wife and seven children.

—Adjutant and Inspector General Floyd has issued an order raising the standard for military companies. Commands not drilling often and regularly are to be dropped. General Floyd expects the militia to appear several times this year and hopes to make some highly creditable displays.

—A sewing machine repairer who had been in Camden a short while made himself quite obnoxious by abusing the Confederate soldiers and slandering Southern women. Saturday night he was informed that he would have to leave. He was taken to the depot and permitted to leave without any personal violence being committed.

—A shocking accident is reported from Aiken County. It appears that the little son of Mr. W. Q. Jackson went from school to spend the night with the son of Mr. Ben Red. Mr. Red had just returned home and put his rifle to one side when the boys arrived and the little fellows began fooling with the rifle which went off and struck young Jackson, inflicting a wound from which he died in a day or two. The children were neither over 7 years of age.